



**County of Los Angeles**  
**DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020  
(213) 351-5602

PHILIP L. BROWNING  
Director

FESIA A. DAVENPORT  
Chief Deputy Director

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January 29, 2014

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
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Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Philip L. Browning  
Director

**SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES, INC. FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Serenity Infant Care Homes, Inc. Foster Family Agency (the FFA) in August 2013. The FFA has one licensed office in the Fifth Supervisorial District, and provides services to County of Los Angeles DCFS foster children and youth. According to the FFA's program statement, its mission is "to provide quality foster homes for abused, abandoned, and neglected infants and children, with special emphasis on the care of drug affected infants."

At the time of the review, the FFA supervised 85 DCFS placed children in 55 certified foster homes. The placed children's average length of placement was seven months, and their average age was three.

**SUMMARY**

During OHCMD's review, the interviewed children generally reported: feeling safe at the FFA; having been provided with good care and appropriate services; being comfortable in their environment and treated with respect and dignity. The certified foster parents reported they were supported by the FFA staff in their efforts to provide care, supervision and service delivery to the children placed in their homes.

The FFA was in full compliance with all 11 sections of our program compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirement; Certified Foster Homes; Facility and Environment; Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery; Education and Workforce Readiness; Health and Medical Needs; Psychotropic Medication; Personal Rights and Social/Emotional Well-Being; Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being; Discharged Children; and Personnel Records.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Services"*

Due to the aforementioned, a Corrective Action Plan was not required.

Attached are the details of our review.

### **REVIEW OF REPORT**

On September 25, 2013, the DCFS OHCMD Monitor, Thomas Manning, held an Exit Conference with FFA representatives, Jennifer Choctaw, Executive Director, Linda Kontis, Director of Child Placement and Adoptions and Gloria Burrill, Senior Supervising Social Worker. The FFA's representatives agreed with the review findings.

A copy of this compliance report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller and Community Care Licensing.

Additionally, with the upcoming implementation of the Contract Monitoring Section, we will be able to focus more on quality assurance for an increased uniform standard and comprehensive measure of overall programmatic efficacy by providing additional training, support, and oversight to the FFAs.

If you have any questions, your staff may contact me or Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

PLB:EM:KR  
RDS:NF:tm

#### **Attachments**

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee  
Jennifer Choctaw, Executive Director, Serenity Infant Care Homes, Inc. FFA  
Angelica Lopez, Acting Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

**SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES, INC. FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY  
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW SUMMARY**

**600 S. Grand Ave., Covina, CA 91742  
License Numbers: 191593485**

	<b>Contract Compliance Monitoring Review</b>	<b>Findings: August 2013</b>
<b>I</b>	<p><b><u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u></b> (7 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation</li> <li>2. Serious Incident Report Documentation and Cross Reporting</li> <li>3. Runaway Procedures in Accordance with the Contract</li> <li>4. Are there CCL Citations/OHCMD Safety Reports</li> <li>5. If Applicable, FFA Ensures Complete Required Whole Foster Family Home (WFFH) Training</li> <li>6. FFA Pays Certified Foster Parents (CFP) WFFH Required Supplemental Payments</li> <li>7. FFA Conducts an Assessment of CFP Prior to Placement of Two (2) or More Children</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full Compliance</li> <li>2. Full Compliance</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Non-Applicable</li> <li>6. Non-Applicable</li> <li>7. Full Compliance</li> </ol>
<b>II</b>	<p><b><u>Certified Foster Homes (CFHs)</u></b> (12 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Home Study and Safety Inspection Conducted Prior to Certification</li> <li>2. Agency's Inquiry with OHCMD for Historical Information Prior to Certification</li> <li>3. Timely Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Prior to Certification</li> <li>4. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement</li> <li>5. Health Screening &amp; TB Test Prior to Certification</li> <li>6. All Required Training Prior to Certification</li> <li>7. Certificate of Approval on File/Including Capacity</li> <li>8. Safety Inspections Completed At Least Every Six Months or Per Approved Program Statement</li> <li>9. Completed Annual Training Hours for Re-certification and Current CPR/First-Aid/Water Safety Certificates</li> <li>10. Current CDL/Auto Insurance/Annual Vehicle Maintenance Documentation for CFPs and Designated Drivers, if Applicable Car Seat(s)</li> <li>11. Criminal Clearances and Health Screening/CDL/CPR/DOJ/FBI/CACI/Auto Insurance for Other Adults in the Home</li> <li>12. FFA Assists CFPs in Providing Transportation Needs</li> </ol>	<p><b>Full Compliance (ALL)</b></p>

III	<p><b><u>Facility and Environment</u></b> (7 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exterior/Grounds Well Maintained</li> <li>2. Common Areas/Interior Well Maintained</li> <li>3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Well Maintained</li> <li>4. Sufficient and Appropriate Educational Resources</li> <li>5. Adequate Perishable and Non-Perishable Food</li> <li>6. CFP Conducted Disaster Drills and Documentation Maintained</li> <li>7. Money and Clothing Allowance Logs Maintained</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
IV	<p><b><u>Maintenance of Required Documentation/Service Delivery</u></b> (10 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FFA Obtains or Documents Efforts to Obtain County Children's Social Worker's (CSW) Authorization to Implement NSPs</li> <li>2. CFPs Participated in Development of the NSPs</li> <li>3. Children Progressing Towards Meeting NSP Goals</li> <li>4. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Initial NSP with Child's Participation</li> <li>5. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Updated NSPs with Child's Participation</li> <li>6. Therapeutic Services Received</li> <li>7. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented</li> <li>8. County Children Social Workers Monthly Contacts Documented in Child's Case File</li> <li>9. FFA Social Workers Develop Timely, Comprehensive Quarterly Reports</li> <li>10. FFA Social Workers Conduct Required Visits</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
V	<p><b><u>Education and Workforce Readiness</u></b> (5 Elements)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children Enrolled in School Within Three School Days</li> <li>2. Children Attend School as Required and FFA Facilitates in Meeting Children's Educational Goals</li> <li>3. Current Children's Report Cards/Progress Reports Maintained</li> <li>4. Children's Academic Performance and/or Attendance Increased</li> <li>5. FFA Facilitates Child's Participation in YDS or Equivalent Services and Vocational Programs</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)

VI	<b><u>Health and Medical Needs</u></b> (4 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Initial Medical Exams Conducted Timely</li> <li>2. Follow-Up Medical Exams Conducted Timely</li> <li>3. Initial Dental Exams Conducted Timely</li> <li>4. Follow-Up Dental Exams Conducted Timely</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
VII	<b><u>Psychotropic Medication</u></b> (2 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication</li> <li>2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
VIII	<b><u>Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being</u></b> (10 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children Informed of Agency's Policies and Procedures</li> <li>2. Children Feel Safe in the CFP Home</li> <li>3. CFPs' Efforts to Provide Nutritious Meals and Snacks</li> <li>4. CFPs Treat Children with Respect and Dignity</li> <li>5. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and to Receive Correspondence</li> <li>6. Children Free to Attend or Not Attend Religious Services/Activities of Their Choices</li> <li>7. Children's Chores Reasonable</li> <li>8. Children Informed About Their Medication and Right to Refuse Medication</li> <li>9. Children Aware of Right to Refuse or Receive Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care</li> <li>10. Children Given Opportunities to Participate in Extra-Curricular Activities, Enrichment and Social Activities</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	<b><u>Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being</u></b> (7 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. \$50 Clothing Allowance Provided in Accordance with FFA Program Statement</li> <li>2. Ongoing Clothing Inventories of Adequate Quantity and Quality</li> <li>3. Children's Involvement in Selection of Their Clothing</li> <li>4. Provision of Sufficient Supply of Clean Towels and Personal Care Items Meeting Ethnic Needs</li> <li>5. Minimum Weekly Monetary Allowances</li> <li>6. Management of Allowance/Earnings</li> <li>7. Encouragement/Assistance with Life Book or Photo Album</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)

X	<b><u>Discharged Children</u></b> (3 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Completed Discharge Summary</li><li>2. Attempts to Stabilize Children's Placement</li><li>3. Child Completed High School (if applicable)</li></ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
XI	<b><u>Personnel Records</u></b> (9 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Criminal Clearances (DOJ, FBI, CACI) Signed and Submitted Timely</li><li>2. Timely, Completed, Signed Criminal Background Statement</li><li>3. FFA Social Workers Met Education/Experience Requirements</li><li>4. Timely Employee Health Screening/TB Clearances</li><li>5. Valid CDL and Auto Insurance</li><li>6. FFA Employees Signed Copies of FFA Policies and Procedures</li><li>7. FFA Employees Completed All Required Training and Documentation Maintained</li><li>8. FFA Social Workers Have Appropriate Caseload Ratio</li><li>9. FFA Maintained Written Declarations for Part-Time Contracted FFA Social Workers Caseloads Not Exceed Total of 15 Children</li></ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)

**SERENITY INFANT CARE HOMES, INC. FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY  
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW  
FISCAL YEAR 2013-2014**

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit. The compliance report addresses findings noted during the August 2013 review. The purpose of this review was to assess Serenity Infant Care Homes, Inc. Foster Family Agency's (the FFA's) compliance with the County contract and State regulations and included a review of the FFA's program statement, as well as administrative internal policies and procedures. The monitoring review covered the following 11 areas:

- Licensure/Contract Requirements,
- Certified Foster Homes,
- Facility and Environment,
- Maintenance of Required Documentation and Service Delivery,
- Educational and Workforce Readiness,
- Health and Medical Needs,
- Psychotropic Medication,
- Personal Rights and Social Emotional Well-Being,
- Personal Needs/Survival and Economic Well-Being,
- Discharged Children, and
- Personnel Records.

For purposes of this review, 10 children were selected for the sample. The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) interviewed 5 of 10 children. Five children were pre-verbal and were observed to be well-cared for with their certified foster parents. OHCMD reviewed all 10 case files to assess the care and services they received. Additionally, 5 discharged children's files were also reviewed to assess the FFA's compliance with permanency efforts. At the time of the review, 5 placed children were prescribed psychotropic medication. We reviewed their case files to assess for timeliness of Psychotropic Medication Authorizations and to confirm the required documentation of psychiatric monitoring.

OHCMD reviewed five certified foster parent files and five staff files for compliance with Title 22 Regulations and County contract requirements. Interviews were conducted with five certified foster parents to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children.

**CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE**

OHCMD did not find any areas to be out of compliance.

**PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM DCFS OHCMD's FOSTER FAMILY AGENCY CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

The OHCMD's last compliance report dated December 12, 2012, identified one recommendation.

## **Results**

Based on OHCMD follow-up, the FFA fully implemented the previous recommendation for which they were to ensure that:

- Certified foster homes would not exceed the County Contract requirement of two children per home for the first year of certification.

OHCMD will visit the FFA in June 2014 to provide the FFA with technical assistance, additional training, support, and oversight to the FFAs.

## **MOST RECENT FISCAL REVIEW CONDUCTED BY THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER (A-C)**

A fiscal review of the FFA has not been posted by the A-C.